



NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FULL AUTHORITY

WELLAND

AGENDA

MARCH 21, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES - FULL MEETING – FEBRUARY 15, 2012

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held February 15, 2012.

(2) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(3) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(4) CAO'S REMARKS

(5) FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT AND FLOOD PLAIN CALCULATIONS

Staff will be in attendance to made presentations regarding these matters.

(6) 2012 PROJECT BUDGET REVISION – HALDIMAND - REPORT NO. 16-12

Attached is Report No. 16-12 noting this change.

(7) ALLOCATION OF SURPLUS/RESERVES 2011 YEAR END - REPORT NO. 17-12

Attached is the Current and Capital 2011 year end summaries together with Report No. 17-12.

(8) PFOS COMPONENTS AT THE BINBROOK RESERVOIR (UPDATE) – REPORT NO. 18-12

Attached is Report No. 18-12 regarding this matter.

(9) PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 19-12

Attached is Report No. 19-12 regarding the status of Authority Projects/Programs to date.

(10) OTHER BUSINESS

(11) **IN-CAMERA**

(a) Tree by-law – Report No. CR-02-12

ADJOURNMENT



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 9, 2012

SUBJECT: 2012 Project Budget Revision - Haldimand– Report No. 16-12

Subsequent to Board Resolution FA-23-12 approved (recorded vote) at the February 15, 2012 Board meeting, I became aware of an error in assessing a Special Levy of \$3,000 for Haldimand County. The NPCA levied Haldimand County in 2011 for work on the Hedley Forest however, as work was not completed in 2011, the appropriate amount would be allocated to corresponding reserves to undertake the work in 2012. Unfortunately I inadvertently indicated this amount as an additional 2012 levy to Haldimand rather than utilizing the reserve amounts. This correction within the budget will result in the Haldimand County assessed levy for 2012 to be \$3,000 less than approved.

Below is the resolution as adopted on February 15, 2012 with the above correction in the recommendation to be adopted in this report.

That Report No. 10-12 regarding the Proposed 2012 Project Budget be received; and

That the Proposed 2012 Project Budget with a total expenditure of \$4,863,578 and a general levy of \$642,400 and special levies of \$942,892 to the Region of Niagara, \$263,708 to the City of Hamilton and \$3,000 to Haldimand County be approved; and

That the 2012 general levy in the amount of \$642,400 be apportioned to the member municipalities on the basis of the CA Levy Regulation (O Reg. 670/2000) for the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority modified in accordance with the 4 Year Levy Implementation Plan for the Years 2010 – 2013 (NPCA Report No. 63-09); and

That special levies for the 2012 Project Budget be assessed in the amount of \$942,892 to the Region of Niagara, \$263,708 to the City of Hamilton and \$3,000 to Haldimand County.

RECOMMENDATION:

That resolution FA-23-12 regarding the Proposed 2012 Project Budget be amended as follows:

That the Proposed 2012 Project Budget with a total expenditure of \$4,863,578 and a general levy of \$642,400 and special levies of \$942,892 to the Region of Niagara, \$263,708 to the City of Hamilton and \$3,000 to Haldimand County be approved; and

That the 2012 general levy in the amount of \$642,400 be apportioned to the member municipalities on the basis of the CA Levy Regulation (O Reg. 670/2000) for the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority modified in accordance with the 4 Year Levy Implementation Plan for the Years 2010 – 2013 (NPCA Report No. 63-09); and

That special levies for the 2012 Project Budget be assessed in the amount of \$942,892 to the Region of Niagara, \$263,708 to the City of Hamilton.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D'Amario, P. Eng., CAO/Secretary-Treasurer



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: March 15, 2012

SUBJECT: Allocation of Surplus/Reserves 2011 Year End - Report No. 17-12

The purpose of this report is to provide our Auditors with direction regarding the allocation of reserves to finalize the 2011 Year End Financial Statements. Following my preliminary year end estimates as provided in reports 08-12 and 09-12 from the February 15, 012 meeting, I have prepared the attached final budget summary outlining the Revenues and Expenses. In addition, attached is the Current Budget – General and Special Levy statement of surplus/deficit and a statement of Reserves and Reserve Fund Balance with the assumption that the recommended allocations (outlined below) are adopted by the Board.

2011 Year End Current Budget

The final overall expenditure of \$7,839,743 is approximately \$45,000 less than previously reported in my year end estimates due primarily to re-allocation of staff time to capital projects undertaken in Land Management. The difference between the final expenditures and revenues is \$35,000 and represents the net payout of allocated sick bank for 2 employees who retired during 2011.

It is recommended that the sick bank reserve be utilized to finance this difference which would leave approximately \$22,600 in the sick bank reserve account. This balance is sufficient to offset the remaining liability to pay out the sick bank to remaining staff who have sick bank allotments. No additional liabilities will be incurred as the sick bank system was eliminated some time ago.

The General Levy Surplus as outlined on the attachments is \$53,509.82 and I am recommending this amount be allocated to the Equipment Reserve (currently at \$22,180).

Under the Conservation Land Management Programming, there are levy surpluses of \$2,133.40 and \$1,433.61 for Conservation Area Operations in Hamilton and Haldimand respectfully. It is recommended these amounts be allocated to the respective Operating Reserves.

The final recommendation with respect to the Operating Budget Levy relates to debt charges (Niagara Region Special Levy). Although the budget amount as advised by the Niagara Region was set at \$1,638,090, the actual invoices received from the Niagara Region were \$1,546,119 due primarily to fluctuating and lower interest rates. The generated surplus (\$91,971) would normally be allocated to the Debt Charge Reserve however I believe there is a sufficient existing amount in this account to deal with near future debt payment variances. The NPCA is in need of allocating funding to offset future retired employee benefit costs as well as replacing aging and obsolete office

communication infrastructure. These are very important components of the NPCA operations however it is very difficult to include these costs during severe budget constraints and minimal levy increases requested from our member municipalities. Accordingly, I am recommending the allocation of this surplus as follows: \$65,000 to the Retirees Benefits Liability Fund and the balance of \$26,971 to Computers and Office Equipment. The Retirees Benefits Liability currently stands at \$65,000 and this allocation would increase the amount to \$130,000. I have requested our auditors to undertake an actuary calculation to estimate the liability in this regard and will have the information available to the Board in the near future.

Revenues for fees for Planning Applications and Regulation Permits were higher than anticipated for 2011. As it is important to accommodate other years where fees are lower than budgeted or if unforeseen legal fees are incurred, a reserve was established in this regard. Accordingly, I am recommending the surplus fee amount of \$65,329 be added to the current Regulations and Planning Services Operating Reserve.

2011 Year End Project Budget

Final project expenditures are generally in line with the previous estimates with minor variations. I am therefore recommending reserve fund allocations that vary from the approved budget as follows:

Resource Inventory and Monitoring Program

The Resource Inventory and Monitoring Program expenditures were less than anticipated and as such, surpluses Special Levy for Niagara and Hamilton were \$8,126 and \$366 respectively. My recommendation is to allocate these amounts in the appropriate capitals.

The Watershed GIS program and Natural Areas Inventory/Natural Heritage Systems projects were funded through the Niagara Region Water Smart Program. Additional costs were incurred in 2011 for these projects and I am recommending reserve allocations of \$12,475 and \$50,530 to these projects respectfully. The net remaining reserve balance for water smart funding is \$22,118.

Land Acquisition Program - Niagara

The purchase of additional lands (Lathrop and McGowan) and costs associated with acquiring the St. Johns Centre land resulted in an expenditure of \$27,597 over the approved \$500,000 budget. I am therefore recommending allocating this amount from the Niagara Land Acquisition Reserve.

Land Acquisition Program – Hamilton

There were no 2011 expenditures in this regard and accordingly I am recommending allocating the budgeted amount of \$100,000 to the Hamilton Land Acquisition Reserve.

Unexpended project amounts in the Land Management Project Program will require the following additional allocations:

\$18,887 to Conservation Area Capital Reserve – Hamilton
\$9,906.62 to Conservation Area Capital Reserve – Haldimand

Summary of Recommendations

Operating Budget

Allocate \$35,000 from Sick Bank Reserve to CA Land Programming

Allocate General Levy surplus of \$53,509 to Equipment Reserve

Allocate Special Levy – CA Operations – Hamilton – surplus of \$2,133 to corresponding reserve

Allocate Special Levy - CA Operations – Haldimand – surplus of \$1,433 to corresponding reserve

Debt Charge Payment Surplus - Niagara

- Allocate \$65,000 to Retirees Benefits Liability

- Allocate \$26,971 to Computers and Office Equipment Reserve

Allocate \$65,329 Surplus Planning/Regulation fees to corresponding reserve

Capital/Project Budget

Allocate \$8,126 to Resource Inventory and Monitoring Reserve – Niagara

Allocate \$366 to Resource Inventory and Monitoring Reserve – Hamilton

Allocate \$12,475 from Reserves to GIS Project

Allocate \$50,530 from Reserves to NAI/NHS Project

Allocate \$27,597 from Land Acquisition Reserves – Niagara

Allocate unexpended Special Levy \$100,000 to Land Acquisition - Hamilton

Allocate unexpended Special Levy \$18,887 to Conservation Area Capital Reserve – Hamilton

Allocate unexpended Special Levy \$9,906 to Conservation Area Capital Reserve – Haldimand

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Allocation of Surplus/Reserves for the Operating and Capital/Project Budget as recommended in Staff Report No. 17-12 be approved.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D’Amario, P. Eng. CAO/ Secretary-Treasurer



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: March 15, 2012

SUBJECT: PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir (update) – Report No. 18-12

The Ministry of the Environment is waiting for the results of additional studies from Tradeport.

This information will be presented to the MOE, the City of Hamilton and the NPCA at a meeting scheduled for mid-April. In early April, staff at the Binbrook Conservation Area will be re-starting the water treatment and distribution system for the park. As a precaution, samples will be taken of the well water and beach water. These will be sent away for PFOS testing.

Staff are still waiting for information from the City of Hamilton regarding the community liaison committee.

Any further developments regarding the PFOS issue since the preparation of this report will be presented at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

The That Report No. 18-12 regarding PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir be received.

Prepared by: Darcy B. Baker, Director-Land Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D'Amario, P. Eng. CAO/ Secretary-Treasurer



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: March 21, 2012

RE: PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 19-12

WATER MANAGEMENT

I. Watershed Development Services Division

1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review

i) Since January staff continue to respond to a steady stream of planning and building permit applications. The number of Niagara Escarpment Plan applications is increasing.

Staff would also advise that activity on many older subdivision and other complex files that have been dormant for the last 5 years is increasing. This can be attributed to a variety of factors (e.g. the availability of new servicing capacity in Fort Erie; Nyon Oil in Port Colborne before the OMB, etc.).

Some municipalities that had been intermittent in requiring preconsultation on Planning Act applications are now requesting NPCA staff to attend meetings to address environmental matters identified in the Niagara Planning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This helps applicants understand at the beginning of the process what studies are needed to support their applications.

This is positive, however we are currently short staffed and it is challenging to accommodate all requests in the timelines requested. Staff attempt to provide municipal partners with comments on the applications in a timely way, however, extensions to deadlines have been requested by the NPCA in a number of cases.

ii) Welland River :Staff continue spending a considerable amount of time responding to property inquiries in the office or over the phone from landowners ,real estate agents, etc. regarding floodplain mapping for the Welland River in Wainfleet, West Lincoln, Pelham and Welland.

A meeting was held recently with Planning official from the affected municipalities and we are currently working on an FAQ for them to assist them with answering counter enquiries, etc..

2) NPCA 'Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alteration to Shorelines and Watercourses'

i) Permits

To date, 12 permits have been issued and several permits extended. Currently permits are being dealt with on an "as needed" basis. Permit applications that indicate work is going to begin after April 1st are being held until new staff is in place. The Planning Analysts are responding to permit inquiries in the interim.

ii) Violations

Outstanding violations are also being dealt with on an “as required basis” until the new Construction Compliance Technician is in place. The Watershed Biologist has been inspecting and advising on critical complaints.

iii) NPCA-DFO Partnership Agreement

The NPCA is under agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to review works in or near water to determine whether the work is likely to result in the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat (HADD). In As part of the NPCA-DFO Partnership Agreement, NPCA staff work as a liaison between DFO Assessors and proponents to recommend appropriate fish habitat compensation projects.. This year the watershed biologist has assumed this role and has been consulted on 3 matters to date.

iv) Municipal Drain Maintenance Review

The NPCA previously represented Conservation Authorities located in Central Ontario on the DART Committee with representatives of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Drainage Superintendents Association of Ontario, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (Land Drainage Committee), Association of Municipalities of Ontario – Rural Caucus, OMAFRA, MNR and Conservation Ontario. The purpose of the DART is to develop a consistent approach and technical direction with regard to municipal drainage project review under Conservation Authority Regulations.

NPCA’s role on the Committee is uncertain at this time, however, we will review and/or process work applications in the interim.

3) Natural Heritage System Project

Staff have completed edits to the final report. It will be posted online shortly.

II. Watershed Technical Services Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

- The Source Protection Committee (SPC) approved the draft proposed Source Protection Plan (SPP), and Explanatory Document on February 21, 2012. The first public consultation period for the proposed SPP began on Mach 2, 2012 and extends for 35 days. As part of this public consultation period the SPP and Explanatory Document were posted on NPCA’s source protection website, and notices were placed in the local daily newspapers. Notification letters were also sent to each municipality and each implementing body/agency that is identified in the SPP, including landowners who may be directly affected by the SPP. Letters were sent to other agencies that may be interested in reading the SPP such as Niagara Escarpment Commission. Four open house public meetings are scheduled for late March to present the SPP and answer questions.
- Work on the IPZ-3 (event-based modelling) is progressing. Event-based modelling was undertaken for the DeCew, Welland and Port Colborne water treatment plant intakes.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

- Water quality staff is analysing 2011 water quality data (chemistry, biological, temperature, and dissolved oxygen) for the annual water quality report.

- Water quality staff is currently planning field work for the 2012 season. Surface water quality monitoring is tentatively scheduled for 72 stations (same as 2011) depending on funding.
- Staff will be collecting water samples from PGMN wells in early March as part of its regular monitoring program.
- Staff is currently working on the Hamilton Airport 2011 Biological Monitoring Report.
- Planning for biological monitoring is currently underway and will include the Hamilton Airport stations and the Glanbrook Landfill.

3) Special Projects

- WQ staff is still assisting the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and Conservation Ontario with the Niagara Twenty Mile Creek Integrated Climate Change Study. This project will require an upgrade to the Water Survey Canada stream gauge enclosure, installation and deployment of level loggers into groundwater monitoring wells, and installation of a rain gauge.

4) Geographic Information Systems

a) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- With the Assessment Report completed and the draft proposed Source Protection Plan undergoing public consultation, GIS tasks related source water protection are shifting to focus on the archival and long term management of all the technical data.

b) Watershed Development Services Support Activities

- Remodeling continues on the data structures for generic regulation hazard information and mapping. The vendor has almost completed the toe of slope interpretations which will require QA/QC and local integration upon delivery. The updates will help to automate the development services screening derivatives.
- Staff continues with tasks for implementing the Property Info application and have recently moved past a hurdle associated with automating the flow of data from our internal network environment onto the external server where it will be hosted.

c) Watershed Stewardship Support Activities

- Staff is currently populating the spatial restoration database with the stewardship projects from the 2011 field season.

d) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- GIS staff has helped finalize the report and mapping deliverables for the NHS project and continue compiling the accompanying data and metadata.
- When time permits staff continue updating the Natural Areas Inventory ELC mapping so that it will be compatible with the MNR's proposed standard for classifying natural areas in Ontario
- A draft of the Large Scale Integrated Hydrology Data Update Pilot Project was submitted to the Water Resources Information Program at MNR, and several Conservation Authority peers for comments. The report will be finalized upon integration of any pending comments.

5) Flood Control

a) Monitoring & Major Maintenance

i) Staff continues to monitor the water levels at the Binbrook reservoir on a regular basis. As noted in the previous monthly status update, a routine inspection of the Binbrook Dam indicated the valves and valve actuators needed to be replaced. Site work has commenced to remove the faulty actuators and valves and install new equipment. This project is expected to be completed by March 16th.

ii) Staff continue to routinely monitor the water levels at our 14 stream gauge stations, climactic data at our 15 climate stations, and undertake routine maintenance, calibration, and inspections at all 25 installations, as part of the NPCA's routine flood forecasting and warning duties. It is noted that the public is able to access this real-time water level and rainfall information through the NPCA's website.

iii) Water Quality Stations: (Caistors in West Lincoln and Balls Falls in Lincoln): In order to protect against damage due to ice, the Caistors sensor was removed in the fall and will be installed again in the spring. Construction of the Balls Falls station has been deferred until spring of 2012 in order to address Environment Canada installation requirements.

iv) E.C. Brown Cons. Area Flow and Water Quality Station (Pelham): The Region has granted permission to install instrumentation on O'Reilly's Bridge. The conduit mount has been installed on the bridge and the sensor will be installed in the water in spring in order to protect against damage due to ice.

b) Floodplain Mapping

The Consultant working on the Central Welland River is currently undertaking additional work including an alternative analysis in order to double validate the existing mapping as described in a January report to the Board. Work to finalize the Lower and Upper Welland River remapping project is "on hold" pending the above.

III. Watershed Restoration Division

The Watershed Restoration Program is responsible for improving water quality, water quantity and biodiversity within the NPCA Watershed. The Restoration Program advances these areas through the implementation of a comprehensive cost-sharing program that offers local landowners financial incentives to implement water quality and habitat improvement projects on their properties, thereby, rewarding the private landowner who conserves the public interest.

In total, over 75 restoration projects are being planned and implemented this year across all watershed planning areas.

1) Project Implementation – Watershed Plans

- In total 25 woodland restoration / riparian projects will be implemented across the watershed this year. Projects are in the planning phase.
- Over 25 construction projects such as wetland restoration, aquatic in-stream works, erosion and bank stabilization projects are currently being planned.
- Over 20 Best Management Practice (BMP) projects such as nutrient management projects, livestock fencing, cover crops and erosion control projects (rock chutes and check point dams) are currently being planned.

2) Project Completion – One Mile Creek Watershed Plans

The One Mile Creek Watershed Study was completed in October 2005. Since that time, all of the implementation recommendations have been addressed with all of the actions being either in progress or in maintenance. The water quality in One Mile Creek has improved from poor to marginal (based on the NPCA's water quality monitoring program which uses the Canadian Water Quality Index). This system saw decreases in both total phosphorous and E.coli. In comparison to the rest of the Niagara Peninsula, One Mile Creek is ranked 10th out of 72 creeks for its low levels of total phosphorous. The stakeholders on the implementation committee which includes the Friends of One Mile Creek and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, should be commended for their support and investment. The success of this initiative would not be realized without the individual landowners who have implemented stewardship projects on their properties.

The following are the recommendations from the Watershed Study and the status:

1. **Source controls (Town of NOTL – in progress)**
 - a. Downspout disconnection
 - b. Soak away pits
 - c. Rain barrel program
 - d. Extraneous flow program
2. **Conveyance controls (Town of NOTL – in progress)**
 - a. Perforated pipes / infiltration techniques (as roads are improved)
3. **End of pipe controls (NPCA/Private landowners - in progress)**
4. **Culvert improvements (NPCA/Town of NOTL – in progress)**
5. **Stream restoration/ Habitat enhancement**
 - a. Stewardship Manual (*NPCA – completed 2009*)
 - b. Technical assistance program; habitat/water quality enhancement (*NPCA - in maintenance*)
 - Provided technical assistance to 22 landowners (since 2006)
 - Provided grants and project facilitation to 15 projects (since 2006)
 - There are 17 properties with projects planned for 2012, including the Niagara Restoration Councils Landsdowne Pond Project and Friends of One Mile Creek spring planting.
 - c. Stream clean-up program (*FOMC/NPCA – in maintenance*)
 - 10 community creek clean up events since 2006
 - Next creek clean-up is planned for April 21st 2012
6. **Landsdowne Pond**
 - a. Detailed assessment of the pond
 - Landsdowne pond property title search (*NPCA – completed 2010*)
 - *Landsdowne Pond and Outlet Assessment (NPCA – completed 2007)*

- b. Habitat works (*NPCA/MNR/NRC/FOMC/Town of NOTL – in progress*)
 - Landsdowne Biodiversity Project 2011-2012 (Invasive species removal, native plantings, upstream riparian habitat enhancement)
- c. Weir and outlet modification – North of Niagara Boulevard (**determined to be nonessential**)
 - Suggested by study consultants but not deemed necessary by NPCA or MNR (landowner)

7. Erosion remediation (*NPCA/Town of NOTL – in progress*)

- a. Old landfill north of Nassau Street
 - Bioengineering and bank stabilization 2005
 - Town of NOTL monthly inspections and garbage removal
 - FOMC semiannual Creek clean up events since 2006
 - AMEC William Street Landfill Monitoring report 2008
 - Surface water monitoring program downstream of landfill 2010-2012

8. Environmental monitoring (*NPCA/FOMC – in maintenance*)

3) Outreach & Education

Canopies for Kids

- The goal of Canopies for Kids is to engage elementary students from all school boards in the NPCA’s jurisdiction to learn through hands-on involvement, the benefits that trees provide. The science-based program is adapted for grades 1 to 8 and meets the Life Systems Strand of the Ontario Curriculum. The program will provide a deeper look at how trees improve biodiversity, water quality and air quality. Studies have shown that trees can reduce asthma rates related to poor air quality, contribute to increased physical activity, mood improvement and promote psychological well-being. Students will learn about the benefits of trees and forests and how they help our ecological, economic and social environment.

This year, 50 applications from across the entire watershed from were received by the January 27th, 2012 deadline. The following 10 schools were selected by the review committee to participate in the program:

Fort Erie:	St. Joseph – Catholic Crystal Beach - Public		St. Catharines:	Apple Wood – Public Burleigh Hill – Public St. Anthony – Catholic
Grimsby:	Lakeview – Public			
Niagara Falls:	Cardinal Newman – Catholic		Wainfleet:	St. Elizabeth – Catholic
Port Colborne:	St. John Bosco - Catholic		Welland:	St. Mary – Catholic

The intent is to continue this program until all schools with less than 5% canopy cover in the playground area can be accommodated. There are approximately 80 schools in our jurisdiction that are in need of this program. Funding for this program is currently being provided by WaterSmart Niagara, St. Catharines Green Committee, and the NPCA.

Earth Day

- The NPCA will be hosting a corporate event at Balls Falls on Earth Day, Sunday April 22nd from 10 am – 2 pm. The vent will be open to the public, with the price of park admission, the public will be invited to build a nesting box, decorate it and either take it home or donate it to an NPCA stewardship project. In addition, other activities will take place including guided nature walks. Currently, we have requested a donation from Rona for the material and supplies for the nesting box kits, including the lumber, nails and hammers. The grade 9 shop class from E.L.Crossley will be preparing the kits (cutting the wood). Stay tuned for more information.

Landowner Stewardship Guide

- Building on the success of the One Mile Creek Landowner Stewardship Guide, staff are working to modify this guide to a watershed wide “How to” guide for landowners. Main topic sections will focus on improving water quality and biodiversity. The guide is currently undergoing final edits. The St. Catharine’s Green Committee is interested in funding a portion of the printing costs; negotiations are underway, with the ultimate goal of launching the document in the Walkers Creek Watershed in partnership with the Committee and the Walkers Creek Residents Association.

Yellow Fish Road Program

- This year will be the 12th year that the NPCA has been coordinating the Yellow Fish Road (YFR) program locally on behalf of Trout Unlimited. Since 2006, 38 school groups have been reached, including over 480 students. There have been 1201 drains painted and approximately 4000 door hangers distributed. The NPCA will be distributing the new YFR brochures to all watershed schools in the spring 2012 to try to increase participation in the program this season. NPCA staff continue to liaise with Trout Unlimited for ordering supplies and tracking participants. Trout Unlimited is hoping to have their annual Yellow Fish Road Day on Friday June 8th. The NPCA will seek out a community group or school to participate in the YFR program that day to celebrate YFR Day here in Niagara.

Niagara Envirothon

- The Steering Committee is gearing up for the 5th annual Niagara Envirothon, an outdoor environmental skill testing competition for high school students. To celebrate our 5th year of the program, the steering committee held an official logo contest and chose the winning logo in December 2011 from E.L.Crossley Secondary School. This logo will appear on promotional materials, banners, t-shirts, etc.

This year’s event will be held at the new Jericho House retreat in Wainfleet. NPCA staff have been working with the Jericho House on a naturalization project, making it an ideal location to hold our event. Invitations to participate in the Niagara Envirothon have been sent out to all schools in the Niagara Peninsula and we currently have 13 teams registered from 7 different schools across Niagara. The Envirothon will be held on April 4th (workshop/review day) and April 18th (competition day). The Steering Committee is assembling a team of professionals from across the Niagara region to host the various ecostations at the workshop.

Registered schools include:

Beamsville District Secondary School (Lincoln)
Ridgeway Crystal Beach High School (Fort Erie)
Denis Morris Catholic High School (St. Catharines)
E.L. Crossley Secondary School (Pelham)
Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School (St. Catharines)
Stamford Collegiate (Niagara Falls)
Lakeshore Catholic High School (Port Colborne)
Westlane (Niagara Falls)

Community Fisheries Involvement Programs

- The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) has been collecting fisheries data in the Welland River Watershed for almost a decade. There are two active programs that allow the NPCA to collect this information, the Angler Catch & Release Program, and the Angler Diary Program. Both programs rely on local anglers to support the data collection. The Fish Tagging Program captures fish through netting and angling, marks the fish with an identification tag, and then relies on anglers to call in to report having caught a tagged fish. The Angler Diary program encourages anglers to record information about their recreational fishing activities. These programs were originally created to monitor the success of the Walleye Stocking Program in the Welland River (partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Conservation Authority, Fort Erie Conservation Club and the Port Colborne and District Conservation Club) and to assist with the prioritization of restoration work within the Welland River.

IV. Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

a) Lyons Creek East – Contaminated Sediment

- All agencies who have a responsibility / jurisdiction regarding permissions and approvals in the Lyons Creek East Study Area, have had the proper training regarding the implementation of the Administrative Controls Protocol for Monitored Natural Recovery of contaminated sediment. The roles and responsibilities of the signatory agencies have been confirmed and the protocol is now active.

b) Monitoring & Assessment

- The Welland River Eutrophication Study is complete. It is anticipated that a phosphorus reduction strategy will be developed with local partners and stakeholders to address Eutrophication and Undesirable Algae in the Welland River watershed.

c) Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

- The Governments of Canada and the United States (the Parties) are nearing the end of negotiations to amend the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).

d) Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Ecosystem (COA).

- The 2007 Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA) has been extended until June 24, 2012.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

The Pathways to Peace exhibit will continue to run until April 30th. Family Day attracted 372 visitors and the gift shop made approximately \$2,000.00. Relatively speaking, it was a good day. March Break and 1812 Bicentennial events continue to be planned and implemented. The March 17th talk featuring Cheryl Macdonald had to be cancelled due to the presenter's poor health. Appropriate action has been taken to inform the public that the talk has been cancelled. The March Break camp will feature program themes on An 1812 Adventure, All is Quiet: Winter Animals, Pioneer Play, Wild about Winter, and Eco-Explorers.

Staff are awaiting results from the MAP Grant aimed at supporting the Crystals to Gems Exhibit in 2012. Officials have said the grant looks positive and results will be revealed at the end of March. The 2012 Jubilee Grant was approved for \$900.00. This money will finance a free event at Ball's Falls on May 22nd. This event is already drawing new partners including the United Empire Loyalist Association, the Veterans, and will feature a swearing in ceremony for new Canadians.

Applications have been submitted for Provincial and Federal summer employment programs at Ball's Falls, Binbrook Conservation, Long Beach and Chippawa, and St. Johns conservation areas.

Follow up was conducted for a Museums and Technology Fund grant prepared in 2011. The application was successful and brought in approximately \$18,000 for museum computerization to commence in 2012. A job ad and press release requesting candidates for the position will go out to local media. Staff also posted the job on the CMA, CHIN network and OMA job hotlines. Interviews will begin in mid March and the position is slated to start on April 16th for 41 weeks. Many applications have been received as a result of the CMA posting.

Press Releases, posters and flyers have been submitted for approval to Marketing and/or produced in part and distributed through Ball's Falls and NPCA Marketing for Bi-centennial of the War of 1812 events, March Break, and the From Crystals to Gems exhibit.

The Site Administrator returned from Japan on Feb. 10 promoting Ball's Falls, the NPCA and the area and its wineries serving as a key note speaker at a museums conference in Sapporo. The trip was entirely funded by the Hokkaido Historical Museum Foundation. The Hokkaido Museum will be putting up a permanent display on Ball's Falls and the NPCA in its visitor centre.

The February edition (Vol. 1, # 2) of the Ball's Falls video newsletter has been posted on YouTube, the home page and Facebook. The video newsletter was prepared and sent to subscribers and members in February via e-mail.

The Barn rentals are sold out for Fridays and Saturdays in 2012 already. Only a few Sundays remain. The CFC has sold out September and October rentals in 2012.

Grounds staff have been doing additional ongoing maintenance and winter preparations including the refinishing of the Field Centre floor, new barn windows and doors, and helping redo the Mill's exhibition for May.

The amount of rainfall this winter has saturated the soils and impacted the site drainage to the east of the Centre and near the switchback trail. Staff have reviewed minor site works and new culverts and drains needed in this area to improve drainage. These works will be scheduled with the site capital and operations projects for this season.

Binbrook Conservation Area

Splashpad upgrades are underway. Contractors will be out on site installing the new structure and treatment equipment over the next several weeks. The contract will be completed by the end of April.

Staff are working with the Glanbrook Conservation Committee on a tagged catch and release program to be kicked-off at the Annual Binbrook Spring Crappie Derby on Saturday, May 12th. More details on the event will follow in April.

Multisport has confirmed details for the Annual Binbrook Triathlon in June. This event attracts hundreds of participants and visitors.

Staff are meeting with representatives from Camp Marydale at their property to discuss their request for lake access near the weir and gather more information on their programs and activities. Our site access to the weir and emergency access to this portion of the property. Staff will bring a report to the April Authority Board regarding the proposed licence agreement with the Catholic Youth Organization and the transfer of property to the NPCA for improvements to the Tyneside Trail.

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas

Online and phone-in camping reservations were successfully launched for the 2012 season on March 1. There have been no problems, errors or complaints.

So far, the campgrounds have accepted reservations watershed-wide and from as far away as Quebec. The dates of the reservations range from the Victoria Day Weekend through to Thanksgiving weekend. As well, camping reservations for special events such as Bolerama weekend (LB) and the Chippawa Creek Bass derby are also being accepted.

This is the second year for online reservations. In 2011, the split between online vs. phone-in reservations was about 50/50. In the first week of reservations for 2012, online reservations represented about 90% of bookings. Customer service was improved by expanding online reservation maximums from 5 days to 28 days.

Long Beach Lagoon:

Built in 1961 and expanded in 1966, the Long Beach sewage lagoon retains 95%+ of its original infrastructure. Minor upgrades to an electrical panel (2010), force-main pumps (1990), and sludge removal (1984) have been the only non-routine work for this facility since construction. A proposal to expand the lagoon in 1981 due to a one-year spike in visitation that caused the lagoon capacity to be exceeded has not occurred again, and that proposal was shelved.

In 2001 – 2003, a series of Sewage System Inspections done by MOE resulted in a request that NPCA review the site's sewage lagoon system as it relates to a very old (1966) and outdated Certificate of Approval for the works. Following discussions, MOE and NPCA staff agreed that

making any substantial conclusions for the lagoon prior to the impending Wainfleet Water / Sewer project would be premature. Because a decision on the project took longer than expected, MOE asked for and received an "Interim Operating Plan" that covered a 5-year window (2011-16). This Plan was a simple document that outlined the operating parameters for the lagoon and identified that any decision on the Wainfleet project would supersede it. In 2011, with the "Find / Fix" program for Wainfleet established, MOE requested that NPCA look at a long-term solution for the site.

The 2011 direction from MOE is that NPCA seek an engineering assessment on the 40 to 50 year old facility. The scope of the project includes inspecting the condition of the physical plant, to determine if it is operating as it should and is not negatively impacting the environment, to assess its suitability for continued operations, and to establish / document operating and maintenance guidelines for future operations and/or make recommendations towards any changes / upgrades.

Stevensville Conservation Area

Installation of the new steel clear span bridge is in progress and work is proceeding on schedule. Staff and the local conservation club have helped to clear trees and brush to access the bridge site with construction equipment. A temporary access road to the site is now in place to handle the construction equipment needed to install the bridge. At the completion of this project the access road will serve as the base for a new granular surfaced park trail.

Beamer Memorial Conservation Area

Staff met with the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch Group (NPH) to confirm details for the group's Public Open House Event on Friday April 6, 2012. Staff also developed the Media Release and website links to announce the group's monitoring season at the park. The 2012 'hawkwatch' season will be March 1 through May 15, where the NPH counts and categorizes all raptors passing over/through the park, and provides an opportunity for the public to become increasing aware of birds as a gauge on global health. As well, the NPH are on site daily 9 a.m to 4 p.m. during sunny flight weather to answer any questions.

Mud Lake Conservation Area

In support of the local 'Port Colborne Canal Days' a Bike Event at Mud Lake Conservation Area has been scheduled for August 5, 2012. This event is a segment of a longer bike race which is hosted and run by the Shorthills Cycling Club Committee. The site will be posted a few days in advance of the event and marshals will be posted at the site during the event to ensure public safety.

St. Johns Conservation Area

NPCA staff is preparing for the stocking of the St. Johns pond pursuing funding sponsors for the cost of the fish. The pond opening is scheduled for Saturday April 28, 2012 at 12 noon.

Gainsborough Central Workshop

Staff completed major maintenance and repairs on Authority equipment. These measures help to extend the life of equipment and ensure safe operations. Two new mowers were received and prepared for spring operations.

Staff assisted with a number of restoration projects that required specialized equipment. The NPCA received a number of calls following the March 3rd wind storm, regarding downed trees. Fortunately, there was no damage to park infrastructure.

Marsh Monitoring Program/ Watershed Health

The NPCA, in partnership with Birds Studies Canada, has assigned an additional 10 routes and 4 volunteers for the Marsh Monitoring Program in Niagara. This program helps in assessing amphibians and waterfowl for wetland health and diversity. Stations include Conservation Areas, and a variety of water sources for marshes to assess the health across the administrative area (i.e. above and below the escarpment; headwater, mouth and coastal areas, lake influenced marshes, in-land, and matching water quality/benthic sites. This data will directly be used to assess habitat and restoration needs.

NPCA Volunteer Opportunity List

The 2012 list of volunteer events has been completed and posted on the NPCA website. Copies were also sent to all high schools, libraries, interested groups and individuals for canvassing of volunteers. A copy of the list can be seen on the NPCA website at:

<http://www.npca.ca/corporate-services/volunteer-opportunities>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Annual Report

Preparations are underway for the production of the Annual Report. Staff anticipates that this will be complete in May.

Earth Day Activities

A number of requests to assist with Earth Day (April 22, 2012) activities have been received. The NPCA is providing information to as many organizations as possible to assist with their efforts to promote environmental stewardship. The NPCA will be hosting a special Earth Day event at Ball's Falls as part of our ongoing outreach activities.

Niagara Region Science and Engineering Fair

The annual Niagara Regional Science and Engineering Fair is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. The fair will be held at Brock University on Saturday, March 24th. Staff will be on hand to judge the competition. The Awards ceremony will take place on April 4, 2012 at Centennial High School. The Conservation Authority has supported this important initiative for many years.

Traitors, Treason and Tunes-War of 1812 Event at Ball's Falls

A number of dignitaries will be on hand to help celebrate a wonderful afternoon of entertainment including a talk by Rev. Canon Robert Brownlie as he speaks about the Ancaster Assize. Guest will have an opportunity to explore the exhibit followed by a performance by the band Muddy York as they give historical background on the music of the period. Tickets to the event, which

will take place on March 31, from 1:00 to 3:30 pm are \$15.00, and members are encouraged to come out and support the event.

Annual Good Friday Hawkwatch Open House

The annual Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch open house at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area is being planned for Good Friday, April 6, 2012. The Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch organization has donated 2 benches to be installed at Beamer and these will be unveiled at the event. A number of activities will be available to visitors.

Niagara Children's Water Festival

Plans for the 2012 Water Festival are proceeding and staff are currently working on following up with potential sponsors. Plans for the Public Day scheduled for Sunday, September 16th are proceeding well. Invitations will again be extended to watershed municipalities inviting them to set up displays showcasing their environmental initiatives.

Source Protection Planning

The DRAFT PROPOSED SOURCE PROTECTION PLAN was approved at the Source Protection Committee meeting held on February 21st, 2012. A series of public open houses are planned as follows:

Monday, March 26, 2012

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
MacBain Centre - Coronation Room
7150 Montrose Road; Niagara Falls, ON L2H 3N3

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

2:00 pm to 4:00 pm **
Four Points by Sheraton - Gibson Room
3530 Schmon Parkway; Thorold, ON L2V 4Y6 NOTE: **Daytime Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Roselawn Centre - President's Room
296 Fielden Ave.; Port Colborne, ON L3K 3J6

Thursday, March 29, 2012

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Casablanca Winery Inn - Traditions Room
4 Windward Drive; Grimsby, ON L3M 4E8

Notices have also been sent to the member municipalities and landowners that may be impacted by the proposed plan. Members are encouraged to attend any of the sessions.

Presentations

Staff made a presentation to the St. Catharines chapter of THE NIAGARA PENINSULA BRANCH OF THE FEDERAL SUPERANNUATES NATIONAL ASSOCIATION regarding the work of the Conservation Authority. The members enjoyed the presentation very much, and had numerous questions.

Niagara Heritage Study

Staff is completing the final report and the project will be rolled to community stakeholders as time permits.

Fundraising Update

The Bob Welch Memorial Golf Classic is scheduled for Tuesday, June 5th at the Whirlpool Golf Course in Niagara Falls. The goal is to register 144 golfers this year. Registration and sponsorship information is being prepared and will be sent out in the next few weeks. A small organizing committee will work on the event with funds being directed to the redevelopment of the Jordan Harbour Conservation Area.

Staff is working with a donor family to install a memorial bench at St. Johns Conservation Area in time for the opening day of trout fishing.

Recommendation:

Report No. 19-12 outlining the status of Authority projects/programs be received for information.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____

Tony D'Amario, P.Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer